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MA Thesis Report:

Jiří Marek

"Bare -ed participles as modifiers"

The thesis reports on a corpus study of noun-modifying bare past participles in pre- and post-head positions. The use of the British National Corpus for the purpose of identifying those constructions was explored, and qualitative and quantitative comparisons of the participles are presented. The research questions are interesting and relevant, however the discussion of the findings is a bit under-developed. More detailed analyses of the data would have been appreciated.

The literature review is well written and covers a wide range of issues relating to the main topic of modifying past participles. There seems to be a slight over-reliance on Huddleston/ Pullum, Quirk, and Bolinger in the review. The study could have benefited from the inclusion of a wider variety of sources and references. At the end of the first section (p. 37), a few paragraphs introducing the empirical study would have been appreciated.

The methods are adequate and reflect the difficulties associated with gathering the noun-modifying -ed participles from corpora. Enough detail is presented so that readers can follow and potentially replicate the study.

The reported results are certainly interesting. Specifically, the fact that few verbs account for the majority of cases in sample 1 deserves further discussion. What could the skewed distribution of participles in table 1 mean? Does this effect have anything to do with lexical frequency rate, probability of word combination/ occurrence in a given sentence?

p. 41: "zipfian distribution" → "Zipfian distribution". It is generally hard to say if a distribution is Zipfian if you didn't fit it properly in comparison to other heavy-tailed distributions, such as log-normal or other types of power law.

Generally, it would have been desirable to discuss your results in the larger context of noun-modifiers. The discussion of the results is basically a long list of example sentences from the corpus, with a few sentences of description. Example sentences are generally quite long (see, for instance, p. 62 or p. 65) and take up a significant part of the latter section of the text. I am pleased to see that the discussion section contains a thorough discussion of the limitations of the study. A more in-depth discussion of the implications arising from your findings would have been appreciated.

Minor comments:
- p. 9: "Theoretical", p. 10: "Practical", "Qualitative" – I am not sure why these words are capitalized

- double parentheses, e.g. p. 14:
"possible referents (e.g., *We took a train that stops at every station*.(Dušková,2012: 68)), in the case of the indefinite first mention (e.g., *He mentioned an incident that I had remembered from my childhood*.(Dušková 2012: 68))"
→ it is better to use [] here and not place a dot before the citation parentheses

- Page numbers of citations are not required in sentences, such as on page 26: "Bolinger (1952: 1117) recognizes two sets of dichotomies related to linear modification: spatial and temporal dichotomies."

- Inconsistencies in spelling: e.g. p. 28: '<actually travelling' has been broadened to mean 'potentially traveling'>
- "postmodifiers" vs. "post-modifiers"

- p. 62 "Cambridge Dictionary" but at other times "The Cambridge Dictionary" (e.g. p. 62, 63).

-Redundant explanations, e.g. p. 62 "sold note" already appears in footnote 13

The thesis is generally not well formatted: different fonts are mixed, odd numbering (part III starts with 4.1.)

References
Inconsistencies in journal abbreviations, capitalization of titles, initials (dots, e.g. Furuta, Huddleston), sometimes initials of second authors appear before last name.

Questions for the defence:

1. Can you explain your findings as presented in Table 1. What could cause the skewed distribution of verbs here?
2. Your study shows the difficulties associated with gathering your type of data from corpora. Do you have any suggestions on how to streamline the process in a future study?

The study explored interesting research questions and utilized adequate methods. Despite some areas of concern (as outlined above), the main objectives of an M.A. work have been fulfilled. I suggest the thesis to be accepted with a grade of *velmi dobře*.

Eva Maria Luef, PhD